

1 S.39

2 An act relating to compensation and benefits for members of the Vermont  
3 General Assembly

4 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

5 \* \* \* Health Benefits \* \* \*

6 Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. § 631 is amended to read: *(House: effective Jan. 1, 2025)*

7 § 631. GROUP INSURANCE FOR STATE EMPLOYEES; SALARY  
8 DEDUCTIONS FOR INSURANCE, SAVINGS PLANS, AND  
9 CREDIT UNIONS

10 (a)(1) The Secretary of Administration may contract on behalf of the State  
11 with any insurance company or nonprofit association doing business in this  
12 State to secure the benefits of franchise or group insurance. Beginning on  
13 July 1, 1978, the terms of coverage under the policy shall be determined under  
14 section 904 of this title, but it may include:

15 \* \* \*

16 (2)(A)(i) As used in this section, the term “employees” includes any  
17 class or classes of elected or appointed officials, State’s Attorneys, sheriffs,  
18 employees of State’s Attorneys’ offices whose compensation is administered  
19 through the State of Vermont payroll system, except contractual and temporary  
20 employees, and deputy sheriffs paid by the State of Vermont pursuant to  
21 24 V.S.A. § 290(b). The term “employees” ~~shall~~ does not include ~~members of~~

1 ~~the General Assembly as such~~, any person rendering service on a retainer or  
2 fee basis, members of boards or commissions, or persons ~~other than employees~~  
3 ~~of the Vermont Historical Society, the Vermont Film Corporation, the~~  
4 ~~Vermont State Employees' Credit Union, Vermont State Employees'~~  
5 ~~Association, and the Vermont Council on the Arts~~, whose compensation for  
6 service is not paid from the State Treasury, or any elected or appointed official  
7 ~~unless the~~ except as specifically provided pursuant to this subdivision  
8 (a)(2)(A)(i). The term "employees" includes employees of the Vermont  
9 Historical Society, the Vermont State Employees' Credit Union, the Vermont  
10 State Employees' Association, the Vermont Council on the Arts, and any  
11 elected or appointed official who is actively engaged in and devoting  
12 substantially full-time to the conduct of the business of his or her the official's  
13 public office. The term "employees" also includes members of the General  
14 Assembly as set forth in subdivision (iv) of this subdivision (a)(2)(A).

15 \* \* \*

16 (iv) For purposes of group hospital-surgical-medical expense  
17 insurance, any employee assistance program offered to State employees, and  
18 any flexible spending account program offered to State employees for health  
19 care or dependent care expenses, or both, the term "employees" includes  
20 members of the General Assembly.

21 (B)(i) The premiums for extending insurance coverage to employees

1 shall be paid in full by the Vermont Historical Society, ~~the Vermont Film~~  
2 ~~Corporation~~, the Vermont State Employees' Association, the Vermont State  
3 Employees' Credit Union, the Vermont Council on the Arts, or their respective  
4 retirees. Nothing herein creates a legal obligation on the part of the State of  
5 Vermont to pay any portion of the premiums required to extend insurance  
6 coverage to this group of employees.

7 (ii) Members of the General Assembly shall be required to pay the  
8 same portion of the premium for group hospital-surgical-medical expense  
9 insurance as is required of employees of the Executive Branch.

10 \* \* \*

11 \* \* \* Compensation and Expenses \* \* \*

12 Sec. 2. LEGISLATOR COMPENSATION FOR 2025–2026 BIENNIAL  
13 SESSION

14 (a) Notwithstanding any provision of 32 V.S.A. § 1052 to the contrary,  
15 members of the General Assembly other than the Speaker of the House and  
16 President Pro Tempore of the Senate are entitled to the following weekly  
17 salary amounts during the 2025–2026 Biennial Session:

18 (1) for 2025, a weekly salary of \$1,000.00 plus an adjustment consistent  
19 with the compensation increase provided to other constitutional officers for  
20 fiscal year 2025; and

21 (2) for 2026, a weekly salary of \$1,100.00 plus an adjustment consistent

1 with the compensation increases provided to other constitutional officers for  
2 fiscal years 2025 and 2026.

3 (b) Notwithstanding any provision of 32 V.S.A. § 1051 to the contrary, the  
4 Speaker of the House and President Pro Tempore of the Senate are entitled to  
5 the following weekly salary amounts during the 2025–2026 Biennial Session:

6 (1) for 2025, a weekly salary of \$1,230.00 plus an adjustment consistent  
7 with the compensation increase provided to other constitutional officers for  
8 fiscal year 2025; and

9 (2) for 2026, a weekly salary of \$1,530.00 plus an adjustment consistent  
10 with the compensation increases provided to other constitutional officers for  
11 fiscal years 2025 and 2026.

12 (c) Notwithstanding any provision of 32 V.S.A. § 1051 to the contrary, the  
13 Speaker of the House and President Pro Tempore of the Senate are entitled to  
14 annual compensation for the 2025–2026 Biennial Session as follows:

15 (1) for 2025, an annual salary of \$19,000.00 plus an adjustment  
16 consistent with the compensation increase provided to other constitutional  
17 officers for fiscal year 2025; and

18 (2) for 2026, an annual salary of \$23,500.00 plus an adjustment  
19 consistent with the compensation increases provided to other constitutional  
20 officers for fiscal years 2025 and 2026.

21 (d) The weekly salary amounts set forth in subsections (a) and (b) of this

1 section shall apply in all circumstances during the 2025–2026 Biennial Session  
2 in which legislator compensation is determined pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1051  
3 or 1052, including per diem compensation under 2 V.S.A. § 23, special session  
4 compensation, and adjournment compensation.

5 Sec. 3. 32 V.S.A. § 1051 is amended to read:

6 § 1051. SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE AND PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE  
7 OF THE SENATE; COMPENSATION AND EXPENSE  
8 REIMBURSEMENT

9 (a) The Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate  
10 shall be entitled to receive annual compensation of ~~\$10,080.00 for the 2005~~  
11 \$28,300.00 for the first year of the 2027 Biennial Session and thereafter, to be  
12 paid in biweekly payments, provided that, beginning on January 1, 2007, the  
13 annual compensation shall be adjusted annually thereafter by the cost of living  
14 adjustment negotiated for State employees under the most recent collective  
15 bargaining agreement, except that, beginning on July 1, 2021, plus an  
16 adjustment consistent with the compensation increases provided to other  
17 constitutional officers for fiscal years 2025–2027. Beginning on January 1,  
18 2028 and annually thereafter on January 1, the annual compensation shall be  
19 adjusted consistent with the compensation increases provided to other  
20 constitutional officers. The salary of the Speaker and President Pro Tempore  
21 shall be paid in biweekly installments.



1 Sec. 4. 32 V.S.A. § 1052 is amended to read:

2 § 1052. MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY; COMPENSATION  
3 AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

4 (a) Compensation.

5 (1) Session compensation. Each member of the General Assembly,  
6 other than the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the  
7 Senate, is entitled to a weekly salary of ~~\$589.00 for the 2005~~ \$1,210.00 for the  
8 first year of the 2027 Biennial Session, plus an adjustment consistent with the  
9 compensation increases provided to other constitutional officers for fiscal years  
10 2025–2027 and thereafter, provided that, beginning on January 1, 2007, the  
11 weekly compensation shall be adjusted annually thereafter by the cost of living  
12 adjustment negotiated for State employees under the most recent collective  
13 bargaining agreement, except that, beginning on July 1, 2021. Beginning on  
14 January 1, 2028 and annually thereafter on January 1, the weekly  
15 compensation shall be adjusted consistent with the compensation increases  
16 provided to other constitutional officers. The salary of members shall be paid  
17 in biweekly installments.

18 (2) Special session compensation. During a special session, a member is  
19 entitled to an amount equal to one-fifth of the annually adjusted weekly  
20 compensation set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection, rounded up to the  
21 nearest dollar, for each day of a special session ~~on which the House of which~~

1 ~~he or she is a~~ that the House in which the member serves shall sit.

2 (3) Adjournment compensation. During adjournment of the General  
3 Assembly, a member is entitled to may claim an amount equal to one-fifth of  
4 the annually adjusted weekly compensation set forth in subdivision (1) of this  
5 subsection (a), rounded up to the nearest dollar, for each week of the  
6 adjournment of the General Assembly.

7 (b) Expenses. During any session of the General Assembly, each member  
8 is entitled to receive an allowance for or reimbursement of expenses as  
9 ~~follows:~~ set forth in this subsection.

10 (1) Mileage reimbursement. ~~Reimbursement~~ Each member shall receive  
11 reimbursement in an amount equal to the actual mileage traveled for each day  
12 of session in which the member travels between Montpelier and the member's  
13 home or from Montpelier or from the member's home to another site on  
14 officially sanctioned legislative business. Reimbursement of actual mileage  
15 traveled under this subdivision shall be at the rate per mile determined by the  
16 federal Office of Government-wide Policy and published in the Federal  
17 Register for the year of the session.

18 (2) Meals and lodging allowance. Each member shall receive either a  
19 meals allowance or reimbursement of actual meals expenses. Each a member  
20 shall be presumed to have elected to receive the meals allowance unless the  
21 member informs the Office of Legislative Operations of the member's choice

1 of a meals allowance or meals expense reimbursement annually prior to the  
2 convening of each the regular and or adjourned session that the member  
3 wishes to receive reimbursement of actual meals expenses. ~~and the~~  
4 member's choice A member's election to receive reimbursement of actual  
5 meals expenses shall remain in effect through the remainder of that session  
6 unless the member notifies the Office, in writing, that the member needs to  
7 change ~~that choice~~ to the meals allowance due to a change in circumstances or  
8 for another compelling reason.

9 (A) Meals allowance. ~~An~~ A member who elects to receive a meals  
10 allowance ~~in~~ shall receive an amount equal to the daily amount for meals ~~and~~  
11 ~~lodging~~ determined for Montpelier, Vermont, by the federal Office of  
12 Government-wide Policy and published in the Federal Register for the year of  
13 the session; for each day the House in which the member serves shall sit.

14 (B) Meals reimbursement. A member who elects to receive  
15 reimbursement of expenses shall receive reimbursement equal to the actual  
16 amounts expended by the member for meals for each day that the House in  
17 which the member serves shall sit, as well as meals for the night preceding the  
18 first legislative day of each week during the legislative session. ~~The;~~  
19 provided, however, that the total amount of the ~~daily~~ weekly reimbursement  
20 available pursuant to this subdivision shall not exceed the daily amount for  
21 meals determined for Montpelier, Vermont, by the federal Office of

1 Government-wide Policy and published in the Federal Register for the year of  
2 the session amount the member would have received for the same week if  
3 the member had elected the meals allowance pursuant to subdivision (A)  
4 of this subdivision (2). The member shall provide meal receipts or otherwise  
5 substantiate the amounts expended to the Office of Legislative Operations in  
6 the form and manner prescribed by the Director of Legislative Operations.

7 (3) Lodging. Each member shall receive either a lodging allowance or  
8 reimbursement of actual lodging expenses. Each A member shall be  
9 presumed to have elected to receive the lodging allowance unless the  
10 member informs the Office of Legislative Operations of the member's choice  
11 of a lodging allowance or lodging expense reimbursement annually prior to the  
12 convening of each the regular and or adjourned session that the member  
13 wishes to receive reimbursement of actual lodging expenses. , and the  
14 member's choice A member's election to receive reimbursement of actual  
15 lodging expenses shall remain in effect through the remainder of that session  
16 unless the member notifies the Office, in writing, that the member needs to  
17 change that choice to the lodging allowance due to a change in circumstances  
18 or for another compelling reason.

19 (A) Lodging allowance. A member who elects to receive a lodging  
20 allowance shall receive an amount equal to the daily amount for lodging  
21 determined for Montpelier, Vermont, by the federal Office of Government-

1 wide Policy and published in the Federal Register for the year of the session  
2 for each day the House in which the member serves shall sit.

3 (B) Lodging reimbursement. A member who elects to receive  
4 reimbursement of expenses shall receive reimbursement equal to the actual  
5 amounts expended by the member for lodging for each day that the House in  
6 which the member serves shall sit, as well as lodging for the night preceding  
7 the first legislative day of each week during the legislative session. ~~The;~~  
8 **provided, however, that the total** amount of the ~~daily~~ **weekly** reimbursement  
9 available pursuant to this subdivision shall not exceed the ~~daily amount for~~  
10 ~~lodging determined for Montpelier, Vermont, by the federal Office of~~  
11 ~~Government wide Policy and published in the Federal Register for the year of~~  
12 ~~the session~~ **amount the member would have received for the same week if**  
13 **the member had elected the lodging allowance pursuant to subdivision (A)**  
14 **of this subdivision (3).** The member shall provide lodging receipts or  
15 otherwise substantiate the amounts expended to the Office of Legislative  
16 Operations in the form and manner prescribed by the Director of Legislative  
17 Operations.

18 (4) Absences. If a member is absent for reasons other than sickness or  
19 legislative business for one or more entire days while the house in which the  
20 member sits is in session, the member shall notify the Office of Legislative  
21 Operations of that absence, and ~~expenses received shall not include the amount~~

1 ~~that the legislator specifies was not incurred~~ the member shall not receive or  
2 be reimbursed for mileage, meals, or lodging expenses incurred during the  
3 period of that absence.

4 (c) ~~For attending a meeting of the Joint Fiscal Committee when a member~~  
5 ~~is not receiving compensation as a member of the General Assembly, a~~  
6 ~~member of the Joint Fiscal Committee shall be entitled to the same per diem~~  
7 ~~compensation and reimbursement for necessary expenses as provided members~~  
8 ~~of the General Assembly for attendance at sessions of the General Assembly.~~

9 ~~[Repealed.]~~ Members-elect; stipend. Each member-elect of the General  
10 Assembly who is not an incumbent shall receive a stipend in an amount equal  
11 to one-fifth of the annually adjusted weekly compensation set forth in  
12 subdivision (a)(1) of this section, rounded up to the nearest dollar, for each day  
13 of attendance at an orientation program for new legislators organized by the  
14 General Assembly and its staff.

15 (d) Death of a member. If a member of the General Assembly dies while  
16 the General Assembly is in session, the estate of the deceased member shall be  
17 entitled to receive compensation for the entire pay period in which the death  
18 occurred.

19 \* \* \* Legislative Leave from Employment \* \* \*

20 Sec. 5. 21 V.S.A. § 496 is amended to read:

21 § 496. LEGISLATIVE LEAVE

1 (a) Any person who, in order to serve as a member of the General  
2 Assembly, must leave a ~~full-time~~ position in the employ of any employer, shall  
3 be entitled to a temporary or partial leave of absence for the purpose of  
4 allowing such employee to perform any official duty in connection with ~~his or~~  
5 ~~her~~ the person's elected office.

6 (b) An employee who intends to seek election to the General Assembly and  
7 to invoke, if elected, ~~his or her~~ the right to a leave of absence pursuant to  
8 subsection (a) of this section, shall notify ~~his or her~~ the employee's employer  
9 of those intentions in writing within ~~10~~ 14 days after ~~filing the primary election~~  
10 ~~nominating petition required by 17 V.S.A. § 2353 or of taking any other action~~  
11 ~~required by 17 V.S.A. chapter 49, to place his or her name on a primary or~~  
12 ~~general election ballot~~ being elected. An employee who fails to give notice to  
13 ~~his or her~~ the employee's employer as required by this section shall be deemed  
14 to have waived ~~his or her~~ the right to a leave of absence under subsection (a) of  
15 this section.

16 \* \* \*

17 \* \* \* Legislative Service Working Group \* \* \*

18 Sec. 6. LEGISLATIVE SERVICE WORKING GROUP

19 (a) Creation. There is created the Legislative Service Working Group to  
20 consider issues related to serving as a member of the Vermont General  
21 Assembly.

1        (b) Membership. The Working Group shall be composed of the following  
2        members:

3            (1) three current members of the House of Representatives, not all from  
4        the same political party, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;  
5        and

6            (2) three current members of the Senate, not all from the same political  
7        party, who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees.

8        (c) Powers and duties. The Working Group shall consider and make  
9        recommendations on issues involving legislative compensation and benefits,  
10       staffing, administrative support, and the length of the legislative session,  
11       including:

12           (1) the current compensation and benefits offered to members of the  
13        General Assembly, including:

14           (A) whether current salaries and benefits, including those added or  
15        increased by this act, are sufficient and, if not, how they should be increased;

16           (B) the impact of current salaries and benefits, including those added  
17        or increased by this act, on recruiting and retaining members from diverse  
18        backgrounds and life experiences;

19           **(C) the impact of making members eligible for the State**  
20        **employees' health plan as set forth in Sec. 1 of this act on members of**  
21        **different income levels;**

1           (D) whether members should be offered additional benefits,  
2           including reimbursement of child, dependent, and elder care expenses;

3           **(E) options for establishing or engaging an independent entity to**  
4           **make adjustments to legislative compensation and benefits;**

5           (F) whether members should have the option to receive a prorated  
6           salary throughout the calendar year instead of receiving their full salary  
7           amount during the months that the General Assembly is in session;

8           (G) whether supplemental compensation should be provided to  
9           members who hold leadership positions in addition to the Speaker of the House  
10           and Senate President Pro Tempore, including caucus leaders and committee  
11           chairs; and

12           (H) how the salaries, benefits, and compensation structure in the  
13           Vermont General Assembly compare to those of other state legislatures; and

14           **(I) how the salaries, benefits, and compensation structure in the**  
15           **Vermont General Assembly compare to the mean and median**  
16           **compensation and benefits of Vermont residents;**

17           (2) whether changes to staffing are necessary, such as increasing the  
18           number of legislative staff in existing staff offices, expanding the types of  
19           legislative staff services available to members, adding caucus staff, and adding  
20           personal staff or providing members with an allowance to hire their own  
21           personal staff;

1           (3) how to increase the administrative support available to members to  
2           increase their effectiveness and ability to respond efficiently to the needs of  
3           their constituents; and

4           (4) whether changes should be made to the length or structure of the  
5           legislative session.

6           (d) Assistance. The Working Group shall have the administrative,  
7           technical, and legal assistance of the Office of Legislative Operations, the  
8           Office of Legislative Counsel, the Office of Human Resources, and the Joint  
9           Fiscal Office.

10          (e) Report. On or before January 15, 2024, the Working Group shall report  
11          its findings and recommendations, including any recommendations for  
12          legislative action, to the Speaker of the House, the Senate President Pro  
13          Tempore, and the House Committee on Government Operations and Military  
14          Affairs and the Senate Committee on Government Operations. Drafts of the  
15          Working Group's report **that are in progress but have not yet been shared**  
16          **with the Working Group** shall be confidential ~~unless publicly released.~~

17          (f) Meetings.

18               (1) The Office of Legislative Operations shall call the first meeting of  
19               the Working Group to occur on or before July 1, 2023.

20               (2) The Committee shall select a chair from among its members at the  
21               first meeting.



1 2024.

2 (c) Sec. 2 (legislator compensation for 2025–2026 Biennial Session) shall  
3 take effect on July 1, 2024.

4 (d) The remaining sections shall take effect on January 1, 2025.